

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: President Ford  
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State  
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President  
for National Security Affairs

DATE AND TIME: Monday, October 11, 1976  
10:08 - 10:35 a.m.

PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: Are you going to resign because your President let you down?

Kissinger: Don't even think of what happened. One little glitch.

The President: I thought I did well except for that one slip.

Kissinger: You have confirmed in that debate the country's need for you and the disaster that Carter would be.

The one thing you didn't get a chance to do is conceptualize. Almost all the newsmen feel the same way.

What Carter said makes you really frightened. I really cracked the press group on it Friday night.

The President: Teeter says the first reports after the debate put us 14 percent ahead. It was after two days of press play on Eastern Europe that it turned around.

Kissinger: For the future, I think what you should do is conceptualize.

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The President: I wanted to show up his defense policy and the "morality" argument.

Kissinger: I would say on the last point you're playing his game. I would hit him hard. Saying he is denigrating America with his talk. It can still be done. I don't know anyone who likes Carter.

The President: I will get some Eastern European ethnics in to say I made a mistake but they know what I stand for.

Kissinger: I agree, and say they shouldn't let Carter use it to demagogue and make cheap shots.

[Omitted here is discussion unrelated to Eastern Europe.]

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